

Message Text

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TAGS: CE,OGEN
SUBJ: NEWSPAPER ACCOUNT OF INTERVIEW WITH AMBASSADOR W.HOWARD
WRIGGINS

1. FOLLOWING IS FULL TEXT OF UNDATED ARTICLE CARRIED FRONT
PAGE 30 JUNE CEYLON DAILY NEWS UNDER UPPER RIGHT TWO-COLUMN
HEAD, 'LANKA'S LEADERSHIP, SENSE OF DIRECTION PROMISING -
US ENVOY. FROM T.M. DEEN IN NEW YORK'
2. BEGIN TEXT: STRIKING A NOTE OF OPTIMISM, THE AMERICAN
AMBASSADOR TO SRI LANKA DR. HOWARD WRIGGINS EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE
IN SRI LANKA'S POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND ITS RIGHT SENSE OF
DIRECTION.
IN AN INTERVIEW IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING HIS OFF-THE-RECORD SPEECH
TO A PREDOMINANTLY AMERICAN AUDIENCE OF ACADEMICS AT THE ASIA
SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, DR. WRIGGINS SAID THERE WERE VISIBLE
CHANGES IN SRI LANKA'S ECONOMY.
'THERE IS MORE A SENSE OF ECONOMIC DYNAMISM,' HE EARLIER TOLD
THE 'DAILY NEWS' BETWEEN BITES OF HOME-MADE PATTIES AND CUTLETS
AT A RECEPTION HOSTED BY THE SRI LANKA COUNCIL OF ASIA SOCIETY.
AUTHOR OF THE CRITICALLY-ACCLAIMED 'CEYLON: DILEMMA OF A NEW NATION'
AMBASSADOR WRIGGINS REMARKED THAT THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN SRI LANKA
ARE LIKELY TO BE BETTER IN THE NEXT TWO OR THREE YEARS THAN THEY
WERE LAST YEAR OR THE YEAR BEFORE.
THE ONLY NOTE OF SCEPTICISM WAS RESERVED FOR THE SRI LANKA
BUREAUCRACY.

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AN EX-DIRECTOR OF THE SOUTHERN ASIAN INSTITUTE OF THE PRESTIGIOUS
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, DR.WRIGGINS SAID HE WAS GLAD THERE WERE A
NUMBER OF COUNTRIES INTERESTED IN THE ECONOMIC PROGRESS OF SRI
LANKA NOW.
'IT WAS QUITE DIFFERENT FROM WHAT IT WAS SAY 20 YEARS AGO WHEN
ONLY THE US AND BRITAIN WERE INTERESTED IN SRI LANKA', HE SAID
BEARING IN MIND THE MANY ASIAN, EUROPEAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN

COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE COME TO SRI LANKA'S RESCUE IN RECENT MONTHS.
MAKING AN OPAQUE REFERENCE TO THE BUREAUCRACY, THE AMERICAN
AMBASSADOR SAID THE ECONOMIC FORCES ONE CAN GENERATE SHOULD BE
GIVEN FREER SCOPE.

ON THE WHOLE SRI LANKA'S SENSE OF DIRECTION, HE SAID WAS PROMISING.
BUT WHETHER THERE IS THE DRIVE TO RELEASE THE ENERGIES IS LEFT TO
BE SEEN.

ASKED ABOUT US ASSISTANCE TO SRI LANKA, AMBASSADOR WRIGGINS CHUCKLED:

'WE WANT TO BE HELPFUL WITHOUT BEING A NUISANCE.'

AMBASSADOR WRIGGINS' SPEECH BEFORE THE ASIA SOCIETY -- WHICH HE
KEPT INSISTING WAS NOT FOR ATTRIBUTION -- WAS ON 'THE CHANGING
SCENE IN SRI LANKA.' END TEXT.

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